(c) whether the price of iodised salt is ten times more than the common salt and the poor are not able to afford it; and

(d) whether the incidence of iodine-deficiency disease like goitre etc. for which iodised salt is recommended, is minimal in States like Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) The Government has prohibited the sale of common salt only for direct human consumption.

(b) Representations have been received in connection with the implementation of the above notification.

(c) No, Sir. The average daily requirement of salt per person is about 10 grams only. The price of loose common salt is in the range of Rs. 2 to 4 per kilogram while one kilogram packet of iodised salt costs around Rs. 6/- per kilo depending on the brand.

(d) No, Sir. Out of 17 districts surveyed in Gujarat, 9 districts are endemic as the prevalence of Giotre/Iodine Dificiency Disorders in these districts is more than 10 percent.

Petrochemicals Plants in Punjab

*353. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a decision to put up a petro-chemical plant in Punjab has taken sometime back;

(b) what is the present status of the Project?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) and (b) The Punjab State Industrial Development Corporation Limited (PSIDC), a State Government Undertaking of the Government of Punjab had submitted an application on March 2, 1994 to the Ministry of Industry for issue of a licence for the setting up of a Naphtha Cracker Project in the State of Punjab. This was supported by the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals and a Letter of Intent (LOI) No. LI; 261 (1994) dated May 4, 1994 valid for three years was issued to PSIDC by the Ministry of Industry. On the application of Letter of Intent holder the LOI was subsequently extended for a further period of six months w.e.f. 4.5.1997. According to the information received from PSIDC, they have appointed M/s. Engineers India Ltd. as consultants for preparation of a Techno-Economic Feasibility Report including the selection of site and they (PSIDC) are making efforts to identify co-promoter for setting up the petrochemical plant in the joint/assisted sector.

Shatabdi Express trains run by the Indian Railways

*354. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number and details of Shatabdi Express trains presently being run by the Indian Railways;

(b) whether several Shatabdi Express trains are incurring losses;

(c) if so, the details thereof and since when these are incurring losses;

(d) whether none of these trains were introduced based on a traffic survey to assess the potential for the growth of traffic; and

(e) what action has been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) The details of the 14 paris of Shatabdi Express trains presently running on the Indian Railways are as under:

S.No.	Train No.	
1.	2001/2002 New Shatabdi Express	Delhi-Bhopal
2.	2003/2004 New Shatabdi Express	Delhi-Lucknow